

## Stress Management Techniques for Middle School Students

### Signs of Stress

- Sleep disruption
- Nightmares
- Eating too much or not enough
- Feeling physically exhausted all day
- Muscle aches and pains
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Headaches
- Explosive anger
- Irritability
- Unusual mood swings
- Withdrawn behavior
- Avoiding family reunions
- Engaging less with friends
- Substance abuse
- Negative attitude
- Inability to think clearly
- Easily distracted
- Difficulty in following a conversation
- Depressed mood
- Anxious feelings
- Drop in grades



### Watch Out!

- \*Spending too much time alone
- \*Monitor the use of electronics: cell phone, tablets, computers and TV
- \*Careful on the information you follow on social media
- \*Thoughts of wanting to sleep and not wake up
- \*Experiencing inexplicable fears
- \*Feeling that you can't "take it anymore"
- \*Do not abuse over-the-counter medication

### Try These Techniques

- Take frequent breaks from social media – avoid information overload.
- Make the time to exercise – choose your activity, just get moving!
- Connect with people who bring comfort – talking to trusted people is helpful.
- Schedule mental breaks – drawing, crossword puzzles, word searches, reading, etc.
- Establish a bedtime routine...free of electronics. Getting 8-9 hrs. of sleep is essential.
- Follow a healthy diet – foods with high sugar or processed food can worsen symptoms.
- Meditate or pray during the day. Nurture your spirituality the best way you know how.
- Keep a journal to write your feelings and thoughts.
- Practice mindfulness – enjoy the present moment use your senses to connect.
- Engage in a constructive hobby: photography, building models, crafts, etc.
- Go outside for a walk to connect with nature.
- Create playlists with your favorite musicians to lighten your mood.
- Make a vision board that helps you visualize a successful future.